

[Links \(https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/links/\)](https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/links/) [Archives \(http://nl.newsbank.com/sites/chlp/\)](http://nl.newsbank.com/sites/chlp/)

[Classifieds \(/classifieds2015/\)](/classifieds2015/) [Careers \(https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/careers/\)](https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/careers/)



Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed: The community's conservation tool

Posted on March 21, 2019 (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/03/21/protecting-the-wissahickon-watershed-the-communitys-conservation-tool/>) by Contributor (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/author/contributor/>)

by Kevin Hughes, Conservation and Easements Manager, Chestnut Hill Conservancy

Conservation easements were established to provide private landowners the opportunity to protect what is important to them – their homes, open space and farmland. Established in 1990, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy's Easement Program seeks to do just that by utilizing the community's conservation tool, the easement, to protect the spaces we all love.

If you call Northwest Philadelphia home, odds are that you are familiar with the Wissahickon Watershed. I would even go a step further and say that for many, the Wissahickon plays an important part in why they live in Northwest Philadelphia.

The Wissahickon Valley Park is a truly unique urban feature. Encompassing more than 1,800 acres, the park offers a plethora of recreational, educational, historical and ecological opportunities to its 1.1 million annual visitors. But if you look closely as you are enjoying your weekend hike or settling down for a picnic, you will see signs of issues that threaten the well-being of the park: stormwater runoff and waste water from development.

In addition to providing ample recreation and learning opportunities, the watershed also protects the drinking water of 350,000 Philadelphians, which means the buffer provided by privately owned land adjacent to the park has a very important role to play in maintaining water quality. As part of the Wissahickon Watershed ecosystem, what you do on your land impacts the ecology and water quality of Chestnut Hill and the entire valley.

Conserving open space and reducing development on your property, planting non-invasive plants, installing stormwater management devices and limiting the use of fertilizers all contribute to a healthier ecosystem and watershed. Your open space is part of a network of privately owned land that is a critical natural resource in Chestnut Hill.

As the first accredited urban land trust in the nation, the Conservancy is proud to be a leader in urban land conservation. When we first initiated our program, we were adopting a tool that had initially been developed for use in rural areas to protect farmland. Our Conservation and Easements Program, which is operated in partnership with the Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW), continues to be a pioneer in urban land conservation. We currently hold 47 easements within the Wissahickon Watershed and have facilitated the permanent protection of more than 140 acres of urban open space.

This is just the beginning, however. As described in FOW's "Protect Our Watershed" study, more than 400 acres in Chestnut Hill were identified as "priority parcels," meaning their protection would contribute to the restoration of the Wissahickon Watershed. Since these parcels are privately held, easements are a very useful tool to encourage open space conservation as it allows owners to keep the deed to their property and retain rights of use of

the property as long as they do not diminish the conservation value of the land.

As development challenges continue to face Chestnut Hill locally and population increase continues on a national scale, conservation easements are becoming more useful than ever. Where public protection of open spaces can be slow to transpire or inadequate, private protection mechanisms, like easements, can create lasting, inextinguishable protections that carry on for generations.

What you do on your property has huge implications for the environment and character of Chestnut Hill and the entire Wissahickon Valley. Truly, the community's conservation tool, easements, help protect the places you love on your terms. To learn more about the impact of easements in the protection of our precious cultural and natural resources, or to learn how you can put an easement on your own property, go to chconservancy.org/easements (<http://chconservancy.org/easements>) or contact me at kevin@chconservancy.org

This entry was posted in Opinion (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/category/opinion/>) and tagged Opinion (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/tag/opinion/>). Bookmark the permalink (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/03/21/protecting-the-wissahickon-watershed-the-communitys-conservation-tool/>).

← 14th District officer, Mt. Airy resident retires after 32 years (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/03/21/14th-district-officer-mt-airy-resident-retires-after-32-years/>)

Antoinette "Toni" Barbara Catrambone Zaccone → (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/03/21/antoinette-toni-barbara-catrambone-zaccone/>)

Sorry, the browser you are using is not currently supported. Disqus actively supports the following browsers:

- [Firefox](#)
- [Chrome](#)
- [Internet Explorer 11+](#)
- [Safari](#)

[Localendar](#)

History in HD
Tue Home Free: Dive Bar Saints World
Nov National Museum of... Philadelphia
29 Tour
Drawing of The Market

[Friends of the CH Library Fall](#)

[Tue Speaker Series 2019](#)

29 Chestnut Hill Bran... | Philadelphia,
A Cordial Invitation from The Guild
PA

[Tue of Sassy Men: An Immersive](#)

29 Animation Experience
Tuesday Night at the Movies:
Arcadia University | Glenside, PA

[Tue "Diabolique"](#)

29 Woodmere Art Museu... |
Exhibition: Our Town: A
Philadelphia, PA

[Tue Retrospective of Edith Neff](#)

29 Woodmere Art Museu... |
Tue Henry Got Crops Farm Market
Philadelphia, PA

29 Saul Agricultural ... | Philadelphia, PA

[Tue](#)

[29](#)

[Wed](#)

[See all events](#) [Add your event](#)

Twitter

Tweets by @TheCHLocal (<https://twitter.com/TheCHLocal>)


- People
- Recent
- Popular

Most Discussed


- Cindy Bass chairs City Council hearings on maternal mortality (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/10/24/cindy-bass-chairs-city-council-hearings-on-maternal-mortality/>)
1 comment · 2 days ago
- News update: Cheese Shop closes, Lutheran Seminary proposes large scale residential development (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/10/09/news-update-cheese-shop-closes-lutheran-seminary-proposes-large-scale-residential-development/>)
3 comments · 2 weeks ago
- Cheese Shop closing is a loss for Chestnut Hill (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/10/17/cheese-shop-closing-is-a-loss-for-chestnut-hill/>)
1 comment · 1 week ago

(<https://disqus.com>)

This Week's Circulars

 **Grocery Outlet**


Hover for Circulars

 **Staples**

Hover for Circulars

 **Mattress Warehouse**

Hover for Circulars

 **Giant Food Stores**

Hover for Circulars

Copyright 2019 - All rights reserved.